

Army University Update

Faculty and Staff Learning Forum

14–16 August 2018

The Faculty and Staff Development Division (FSDD), Directorate of Academic Affairs, Army University (ArmyU), hosted a Faculty and Staff Development Learning Forum 14–16 August 2018 at the Lewis and Clark Center, Fort Leavenworth, Kansas. The purpose of the three-day working event was to allow Faculty and Staff Development (FSD) and quality assurance professionals throughout the Army Learning Enterprise (ALE) to share exemplars and experiences as a community of practice in support of the forum theme, “Collaboration for the Future.”

Brig. Gen. Scott L. Efflandt, provost of the Army University, provided opening remarks stressing the importance of training and education to prepare soldiers to meet the Army’s mission readiness objectives. Efflandt highlighted the “enduring commitment to education and training,” noting Secretary of Defense Mattis’ reference to their significance in the *National Defense Strategy*. He continued by threading the themes of the forum with other ArmyU initiatives that will have a long-term impact on faculty and staff throughout the Army.

FSD chiefs and professionals from ArmyU, Army schools, and centers of excellence (CoEs) facilitated a paper presentation, three roundtables, and five working groups to address key issues affecting soldiers and civilian stakeholders. Dr. David T. Culkin, FSDD, presented his paper entitled “Learner-centered Teaching in Army Faculty and Staff Development Programs.” The purpose of this case-study research was to examine how learner-centered teaching practices can help increase the efficacy of newly designed and implemented courses within the Common Faculty Development Program (CFDP) administered by ArmyU.

Roundtable discussions provided an opportunity for open discussion of a diverse range of topics. Dr. Kyle G. Smith of the Fires CoE presented his work, “School Leader as Educator.” Julie M. Kelley and Lt. Col. (Chaplain) Cloyd Layden of Installation Management Command presented “From Collaboration to Innovation Readiness,” sparked insightful debate on the role of innovation in Army classrooms. Joseph E. Vargo, FSD Chief at the Noncommissioned Officer Leadership Center of Excellence (NCOLCoE), facilitated an informative discussion on “Advanced Artificial Intelligence.” The roundtable discussions complemented the work group projects.

Work groups engaged in collective discussion to develop practical products addressing key faculty development issues common across the CoEs and schools.

Each group presented its findings during the plenary session at the end of day two. Colleagues and peers from across the ALE led the facilitation of each group. Work groups included the following:

- ◆ “Writing Assessment” was led by Joseph Vargo of NCOLCoE and cofacilitated by Ellen Bogdan and Dr. Harold Laurence from FSDD. This work group developed guidelines for assessing the quality of instructor-written communications while answering the key question, How can FSD professionals optimally assess the writing skills of their instructors? The work group presented the following products: (1) a general rubric to assess instructor writing (both formative and summative), (2) examples of success from the field, and (3) targeted skills for new instructors.
- ◆ “Faculty Development” was led by Rick Newton of the U.S. Army John F. Kennedy Special Warfare Center and School and cofacilitated by Dr. Charles Vance and Brandie Wempe from FSDD. This work group focused on the current trends and exemplars regarding the new Common Faculty Development–Instructor Course (CFD-IC) and Common Faculty Development–Developer Course (CFD-DC), discussed the Advanced Instructor Course, and identified “What’s missing.” Participants had an opportunity to provide feedback based upon their recent conduct of CFD courses. The work group presented: (1) an information paper that summarized key themes from the field concerning the implementation of CFD-IC/DC and made specific recommendations to improve the courses and CFD program, (2) examples of success from the field, and (3) a brief on the relationship of FSDD to local FSD and quality assurance offices.
- ◆ “Faculty Incentive Programs/Continuing Professional Development” was led by Trong Nguyen of TRADOC’s Career Program-32 office and cofacilitated by Tirdad Daei and Luis Duperon from FSDD. This work group refined draft policy regarding faculty collaboration and continuing professional development for the ALE. The work group presented the following products: (1) an information paper recapping key themes on the implementation of faculty incentive/development/collaboration programs with specific recommendations for implementation throughout the ALE, (2) examples of success from the field, and (3) suggested adjustments to the draft policy on FSD faculty collaboration and exchange.
- ◆ “What ArmyU Can Do for Schools and Centers of Excellence” was led by Suzanne Vaughan of the Aviation CoE and cofacilitated by Jack Rabon and Jarod Bernotski from FSDD. This work group identified opportunities to develop the relationships between FSDD and the quality assurance offices throughout the ALE. The work group presented the following products: (1) an abstract of key themes from the field concerning the gap analysis and specific recommendations to address those shortfalls throughout the ALE and (2) proposed changes to existing policy.

- ◆ “Feedback Mechanisms” was led by Dr. Sena Garven of the Institutional Research and Assessment Division, Directorate of Academic Affairs, and Dr. Culkin from FSDD. This work group refined draft policy for program evaluation for the ALE to establish a system for program validation. The work group presented the following products: (1) an information paper summarizing key themes on the implementation of a program evaluation system with specific suggestions for implementation throughout the enterprise, (2) examples of success from the field, and (3) suggested modifications to draft policy on FSD program evaluation.

A lively panel discussion highlighted the Learning Forum on day two. Notable guest panelists from academia involved in faculty development were Dr. Jana Fallin, director of the Teaching and Learning Center at Kansas State University; Dr. Regan Gurung, Ben J. and Joyce Rosenberg Professor of Human Development and Psychology at the University of Wisconsin-Green Bay and coauthor of *An Evidence-based Guide to College and University Teaching: Developing the Model Teacher*; and Dr. China Jenkins, executive director of the Teaching, Enrichment, Advising, and Mentoring Center for the College of Pharmacy and Health Sciences at Texas Southern University. The entire forum audience engaged in the discussion that focused on defining faculty development and learning how faculty development program initiatives are implemented at the panelists’ institutions.

Feedback from participants provided recommendations for new initiatives and items for consideration:

- ◆ Establish a common site for online collaboration and networking across the FSD community
- ◆ Retain focus on practical (e.g., work groups and outbriefs) versus academic activities (e.g., paper presentations)
- ◆ Continue to invite panelists who present and stimulate ensuing discussion relevant to the FSD participants
- ◆ Maintain an ArmyU organization overview brief emphasizing current and near-term objectives
- ◆ Consider making this an annual event
- ◆ The small groups facilitated collaboration

The legacy of the FSD Learning Forum will be measured by the degree of networks formed, in the clarity of the enterprise-wide problem statements and solution sets developed, and by continuing communication and collaboration. The continued collaboration will continue the focus of developing, sustaining, and promoting world-class faculty who can accomplish the following:

- ◆ Set an environment that develops critical thinking in adult learners and apply a wide spectrum of techniques that enhance critical thinking
- ◆ Manage adults in an adult learning environment

- ◆ Understand how adults are motivated to learn and possess the skills to inspire adults
- ◆ Communicate clearly
- ◆ Establish personal credibility (have something to offer) and authenticity (care about students)
- ◆ Challenge adult learners and provide required support for their success
- ◆ Engage in the process of continuous improvement as a faculty member

The next FSD Learning Forum is planned for summer 2020, alternating with the biennial Army University Symposium. As a result of this forum, FSD professionals throughout the Army now have better reason than ever to collaborate for future success. 